The Trouble with Teenagers by Breetality

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Summary:

Billy just wants to enjoy some alone time with Steve. Max eats a pot brownie and screws those plans up.

The Trouble with Teenagers

Author's Note:

> Max is 17 in this story if anyone is worried about that.

Billy is seconds away from getting Steve's pants off when the phone rings.

"God damn it!" He growls, lifting his head from where his lips had been pressed against the man underneath him.

Steve squirms and puts one hand on the back of Billy's head to pull him back down. "Ignore it."

Billy shakes his head. "Can't. Might be the school calling about Max." And if it is, he's gonna kill her, because the school only calls when she skips or when she's been in a fight.

Steve groans and reluctantly allows Billy to climb off him.

"Fine. Just hurry back." He shoots him a mischievous look that has Billy's jeans suddenly feeling tight around the crotch area.

"You can count on it, pretty boy." He smirks before swinging the door open harder than necessary and stomps out of the room.

All he has on is a pair of jeans so he's thankful Susan isn't home, at least. Whoever's on the phone, however, is gonna get chewed out and possibly murdered if this isn't important.

Nearly pulling the phone out of the wall, he answers on the fifth ring with a harsh " *What?"* just to make it clear to the person on the other line that they have royally annoyed the fuck out of him.

"Hargrove, it's Hopper."

Billy closes his eyes and sighs. He can only assume why the Chief is calling, and it's not because shit has gone haywire again.

"What can I do for you, Chief?" He asks stiffly.

"Look, kid, I'm sorry to bother you, but I've got your sister down here-"

"Is she okay?"

" *Yeah* ," Hopper says, almost sounding amused, and Billy breathes out an audible sigh of relief. " *She's fine...I think."*

"What do you mean, you *think?"* Billy snaps.

" *Billyyyyy!"* He hears Max call in the background.

Hopper clears his throat. “ *Well, she’s high as a kite, for starters. Says someone at school gave her a brownie, but she won’t say who. Or can’t. Not really sure which one. I was passing by the school and found her sitting outside.”*

Honestly, Billy doesn’t really care if Max smokes weed. He has more of a problem with her coming home smelling like beer and cigarettes than anything else. But he’s pissed that he now has to get her from the station, and he’s pissed that he and Steve were interrupted.

He loves Max (though he doesn’t say it very often) and he’s thankful for the relationship they’ve rebuilt after he survived the Mind Flayer. She’s his partner in crime (besides Steve) and he didn’t even think twice about bailing on moving to California with Steve to stay behind to help with Max after Neil kicked the bucket.

But goddamn, did she make him wanna throttle her sometimes.

“I’ll be there soon.” Not waiting for a reply, he hangs up and puts one hand against the wall and looks down at the ground to get himself under control. Steve comes out to the kitchen, looking concerned.

“What’s going on?” He asks. “Is Max okay?”

Billy chuckles without any humor and glances at him over his shoulder. “She’s down at the station and stoned off her ass. Ate a pot brownie, apparently.”

Steve whistles, but looks relieved that it's not more serious. Hell, he'd probably be laughing right now if Billy didn't look so murderous. "Yikes. Want me to go with you?"

"Not gonna ask you to stay here and make small talk with Susan if she gets back before I do." But yeah, Billy would like to be able to talk to his sister (*talk, not yell, he swears*) without Steve playing mediator. Don't get him wrong, sometimes they absolutely need Steve there to get in the middle and tell them when they're both being pigheaded or ridiculous, but this isn't one of those times.

"I don't mind." Steve shrugs. "You know I like Susan."

It's actually weird how much Steve and Susan get along. He helps her with dinner while they make small talk, sometimes, and gives her hair tips when he thinks Billy and Max aren't listening. Susan always sends Steve home with leftovers, because she adores him, and has absolutely no problem with him and Billy being more than friends.

"It doesn't make any sense!" Billy had snarled at her one night, the night she had told him she knew about him and Steve. "How can you be okay with it?"

And Susan, quiet, mousy Susan, had actually slammed the book she had been reading shut so hard that it made Billy jump in surprise.

"I am not your father, Billy," she had replied in a hard voice that, again, completely caught him off guard. "Please don't get me confused with him."

So that had been that.

“Alright, yeah.” Billy runs a hand down his face. “I’ll be back soon.”

Steve gives him a reassuring smile and walks over to plant a lingering kiss on his lips. “I’ll be here. Try not to be too hard on her. She’s just being a teenager.”

And that’s all she really is. Yeah, she’s developed somewhat of Billy’s attitude, and she smokes now. She doesn’t always come home by curfew and usually drinks when she’s out. But it’s all typical teenager stuff. Nothing that Billy can’t handle, nothing he hasn’t done himself. She’s a smart kid and does well in school when she goes. Only gets into fights with people who start something with her first, though Billy’s trying to teach her to watch her temper.

Which is hilarious, because though Billy’s changed a hell of a lot, and for the better, he still has a bite to him that he doubts will ever go away. He’s not violent, manages to keep his cool more often than not, but there are some things you just can’t change.

“No promises,” he smirks.

Steve rolls his eyes. “Unless you’re gonna show up to the station with a hard-on and no shirt, you should probably go change.”

Billy drives at an unreasonable speed, wanting to get this over with as quickly as possible. When he peels into the parking lot, he's barely in a parking space before he quickly shuts the car off and walks up to the station in quick strides.

He pushes the doors open so hard that it makes poor Flo jump, and she shoots him a glare.

"Mr. Hargrove, please try not to give me a heart attack at my age," she says dryly.

Billy's always had a soft spot when it comes to Flo, so some of his anger melts away and gives her an apologetic look and a smile he knows she can't resist.

Okay, that's not true. Flo is the last woman to fall for his charming act, but he always sees her trying to hide her own smile when he does it, so he'll take it.

"Sorry, darlin'," he says, and leans against her desk. "Got a call from the chief to come pick up my *darling* little sister."

"Ah, yes. They're in his office. You can go right in. Just knock first, you know how much he hates it when you barge in."

“Of course.” He pushes off the desk and flashes her another grin. “Thank you, sweetheart.”

Flo gives him a wave and he makes his way down the hall to Hoppers office.

He barges right in without knocking, because he’s never knocked before and doesn’t have the patience to start now.

Max is slumped in the seat facing away from him, and she doesn’t even move when she hears the door open. Hopper doesn’t seem to be too surprised, either, because he lifts his head from his desk slowly and only looks mildly annoyed with him.

“Bout time,” Hopper grumbles.

“That’s funny, because I broke every speeding law just to get here fast enough.” Billy shoots him a wink.

Hopper rolls his eyes and is about to reply, but Max interrupts him by slowly turning around in her seat to face her brother with a lazy smile.

The first thing Billy notices is that her eyes are bloodshot red. If they weren’t in the presence of Hopper, and Billy wasn’t ready to murder her, he’d be laughing his ass off right now.

The second thing he notices is just how out of it she really looks, which means he's gonna have to save their little talk in the car for when she's sober. There's no way he's gonna waste a perfectly good speech (well, lecture is more like it, by Billy doesn't like to think of it that way) when she probably won't even be able to comprehend what he's saying properly.

"Heyyy, man," she drawls, sounding like every stereotypical stoner back in Cali, ever.

"Hey, man," Billy mocks, then says seriously, "Get up."

"Why?"

"Because we're leaving, that's why."

Max steals a peak at Hopper and giggles. "But I can't leave Hopper here by himself. He'll be lonely." She can't say anything without laughing.

Hopper rubs his temples. "For the love of God, please go with Billy."

" *Up."* Billy hisses to her. When she makes no sign of moving, can only sit there and giggle at him, he goes to stand to the side of her and gently takes both of her hands to pull her up himself. Old him would have thought nothing about grabbing her by her arms and yanking her out of that chair without any care about leaving marks on her arm or hurting her, but he's not that guy anymore.

Besides, he'd hurt himself before ever hurting Max again.

"Stop, I can't walk!" She protests, the smile never leaving her face.

Glad she's at least having a good time.

"Then hold onto me, genius." His patience is running very thin more and more by the minute, but he tries not to be too harsh with her.

Hopper clears his throat. "Look, at this point, I don't really care where she got the pot, but she needs to stop skipping school. Maybe you can *nicely* remind her of that later when she's in the right state of mind." Emphasis on the " *nicely."*

"Oh, I plan to, Chief," Billy says flatly, wrapping one arm around Max's waist when she leans against him so she won't fall.

"Good." Hopper waves them off. "Now, get her out of here. And I don't wanna see her back here again."

"Yeah, tell her that."

Billy, holding onto her the entire time, leads Max out of the office. He's too focused on making sure she doesn't fall on her ass that he doesn't even give Flo his biggest smile on the way out, but he doesn't

miss the purse of her lips or the shake of her head when she sees the state Max is in. He can't really blame her for that, though, because she grew up in a different time. No doubt marijuana was considered the devil's drug in her home growing up.

"Billy," Max whines when they're in the parking lot and nearing the Camaro, "I'm starving."

He bites back a laugh and rolls his eyes. "Of course you are."

"Can we go to the diner?"

"You are *not* sitting in the diner like this." They get to the car and he opens the passenger door, gently helping her in. Then he closes the door and walks around to get in the driver's seat.

"But I'm so fucking hungry!" She groans, throwing her head back dramatically.

"There's food at home."

"Mom can't cook for shit and you know it."

That's true. Susan did her best, and her food was edible, but it was far from the greatest.

“Too fuckin’ bad,” Billy says, frustrated. “Shut up and take a nap or something until we get home.”

That’s exactly what she does. Max can’t keep her eyes open for the life of her and she nods off but she doesn’t quite fall asleep, much to his luck. At one point, she says tiredly, “I am *so* freaking stoned it’s actually insane.”

Billy snorts and takes a drag of the cigarette he had lit. “Christ, Max. Where’d you even get that shit from?”

“Mike,” she answers without any hesitation. “He knows who to go to.”

He’s not surprised, and he scoffs. Of course it’s fucking Wheeler.

“Whatever,” he says. “Look, I don’t give a shit if you smoke weed. You’re seventeen. Just fuckin’ stop ditching school, alright? Or Hopper’s gonna get involved.”

She smirks and reaches one hand out. “Gimme that.”

“No way.”

“Oh, come on!”

“Max, I’m this close to killing you— *hey!”* He barks as she plucks the cigarette out of his hand.

She leans her head back to rest on the window and takes an exaggerated drag. “God, why are they even better when you’re high?”

He should’ve brought Steve along after all.

Susan still isn’t home when they get back, much to Billy’s disappointment. It would have been hilarious to see Max attempt to play sober while her mother talked to her.

He turns in his seat to look at her. “Can you walk, or am I leaving you here?”

Max rubs her eyes tiredly. “I can walk.”

“Come on, then.”

She’s a lot slower than him, and a part of him wants to go right into the house without waiting for her just because of how done he is, but he knows Steve wouldn’t like that. And if she fell or anything he wouldn’t exactly be too happy with himself. So, like the *good brother*

he is, he walks behind her (impatiently), prepared to catch her just in case.

Steve is sitting in the living room watching some mindless show on television when they walk in. He perks up as soon as he sees them and mutes the TV.

“Hey, you two made it back without killing one another,” he greets them with a smile, standing up. He takes one look at Max and raises his eyebrows. “Have fun, Max?”

“Yeah.” It’s all she can manage to say. Billy doesn’t know if it’s the exhaustion or if she’s getting even more high by the minute.

“Go sleep it off,” he tells her, nudging her shoulder with his.

“Mmkay. I think I’m gonna go do that. That sounds like a good idea. I like Billy’s ideas sometimes.” Her words are slightly slurred so, yeah, she’s definitely feeling it even more. Billy’s had a few pot brownies in his day so he knows what that’s like.

Max turns around walks—or more like stumbles—down the hall, bumping into the wall a few times as she does so. Luckily for her there are no stairs for her to climb.

Steve gives Billy an amused look and the other man just rolls his eyes and sighs, walking over to join Steve on the couch.

“She’s gonna be the death of me,” he mutters, putting an arm around Steve.

“Hey, at least there’s one good thing about this.”

Billy gives Steve a questioning look. “What?”

Steve wriggles his eyebrows. “She’ll be asleep for a while…”

All the stress drains from Billy’s face and suddenly he’s got a wolfish grin on his face. “Oh, yeah?”

“Yeah.” Steve starts to play with the buttons on Billy’s shirt. “So, you know, maybe we could go back to your room and finish what we started earlier…”

Before Billy can reply, they hear a loud thump that comes from Max’s room, making them pause.

“ *Billy!”* She calls. “ *I can’t get up! I think I’m sinking into the floor!”*

Steve drops his hands and bursts into laughter, practically doubling over with it.

Billy growls. “Son of a bitch!”

Author's Note:

> Next chapter: Max convinces the boys to smoke with her.